

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### Legislature Approves Graduated License Bill



#### *Legislation Sponsored By Rep. Chapin*

**HARTFORD-** On Wednesday, May 11, the State Senate approved legislation cosponsored by State Rep. Clark Chapin, R-New Milford, that places restrictions on sixteen and seventeen-year-old drivers.

House Bill 5446, An Act Concerning Additional Training And Restrictions For Drivers Under The Age Of Eighteen, now goes to Governor M. Jodi Rell for final approval.

The legislation modifies graduated license restrictions approved by the Legislature in 2003 and will take effect on October 1, 2005. Currently, a 16- or 17-year old learning to drive under a learner's permit must complete, among other things, at least eight hours of behind-the-wheel, on-the-road training before he qualifies for a driver's license. It increases the minimum amount of behind-the-wheel, on-the-road training a 16- or 17-year old must have before qualifying for licensure from eight to 20 hours.

HB 5446 also prohibits a 16- or 17-year old licensed driver from driving from 12: 00 a. m. through 5: 00 a. m. unless he is traveling because of his employment, school or religious activities, or medical necessity. It exempts a 16- or 17-year old licensee from the passenger and hour restrictions if he is an active member of a volunteer fire company or department, a volunteer ambulance service or company, or an emergency medical service organization and is responding to an emergency or carrying out his duties as a member.

In addition, a 16- or 17-year old licensed drivers will be allowed to transport during the first three months of licensure either (1) both his parents or legal guardian, regardless of age as long as one is a licensed driver, or (2) one passenger only who must be either a licensed driving instructor or someone at least age 20 with an unsuspended driver's license for the four preceding years.

“I’m pleased to have played a small part in something that statistics show should have such a positive effect,” said Rep. Chapin. “Increased training and a prohibition on unnecessary driving in the middle of the night will hopefully go a long way toward lessening the number of accidents experienced by our teen drivers.”

